**WRITING EFFECTIVE SUMMARIES**

**A. Identify!**

You can identify what you are summarizing in a variety of ways.

The following are okay, better, and best ways to identify what it is you are summarizing.

OK:

The book

The film

The article

BETTER:

*Painless Public Speaking*

*Forrest Gump*

“Going Under the Light”

BEST:

*Painless Public Speaking* by Sharon Bower

The movie, *Forrest Gump*

“Going Under the Light” from *Newsweek*, October 2, 1995

**A + B + C = TOPIC SENTENCE**

*Painless Public Speaking* by Sharon Bower provides a number of practical hints for people who are afraid of speaking in front of a group.

**BODY:**

Create a fact outline. Then add those facts to your paragraph in sentence form.

**Now you try it:**

A =

B =

C=

Entire topic sentence=

=

**B. Select a Verb!**

Acknowledges illustrates

Adds invites

Answers names

Asks praises

Blames recommends

Captures shows

Clarifies simplifies

Classifies shows

Confirms solves

Confronts suggests

Confuses supports

Contrasts teaches

Considers tells

demonstrates

defends

defines\*

describes\*

discourages

encourages

explains\*

explores

expresses

features

gives

identifies

**C. Finish Your Thought!**

The final part of the topic sentence is easy if you just ask yourself:

*•What is the big idea?*

*•What is the big concept?*

*•What is the main idea of the item that I am summarizing?*

Keep in mind that this is just your topic sentence and that you will be adding all of the facts in the body of your summary paragraph.